

# THE FEED



## ISSUE NO. 90: PARM BONES (AND OTHER FLAVOR RAISERS)

SEPTEMBER 29, 2017 | MO FRECHETTE / BY MO FRECHETTE

Traditional cooking, the popular cooking of countries passed down through time, is the cooking of the poor because, let's face it, there have been a lot more poor people than rich people in history. Traditional cooks figured out how to squeeze the last bit of flavor from the ham bone, to find flavor in foods they might have otherwise thrown away. Turns out this isn't just good policy for thriftiness or the environment. It's super tasty as well.

### **Parm bones**

When you get to the end of a hunk of [Parmigiano Reggiano cheese](#), don't throw out the rind. Put it in a plastic bag and keep it in the freezer. Next time you're making a slow-cooked pasta or rice dish, or a stew, add the "parm bone" to it. Like adding bones to bubbling broth it'll disperse its flavor into the dish, melting slowly away. You can do this with any cheese whose rind isn't waxed or coated.

## Meat rinds

The same idea as parm bones, but add a rind—or chunk—of [bacon](#), [guanciale](#) or [prosciutto](#) to cooking water for pasta or [rice](#). It'll add a lot of flavor to the dish. You can also eat the softened rind after the dish is ready. When the boiling is done you can dress the meat with olive oil, a bit of cheese and eat it as an appetizer.

## Cooking water

Add a bit of [pasta water](#) to your [pasta sauce](#) and the starch that seeped out of it into the water will thicken up the sauce and add some flavor. Or with water that's cooked some carrots or rehydrated mushrooms or somehow seen the benefit of touching tasty food — think about adding it to whatever else you're cooking to pass its flavor along.

## Jarred remains

Before you throw out the briny remains of a jar of food, take a taste. The vinegar and oil from a jar of [sun dried tomatoes](#) can make an amazing marinade. The olive oil in a [tin of anchovies](#) can add depth to a salad dressing, or the start of your next sauté.

## Chicken bones and carrot peels

One of the best ways to add flavor to your cooking is to substitute broth for water. It's super easy to make at home, too. Don't buy ingredients for it. Just save your broth-worthy vegetable scraps like carrots, onion, celery and herb stems in a bag in the freezer. One day, when you eat some chicken, throw the bones in a pot with those scraps, some bay leaves and [peppercorns](#), and cover it with water. Let it simmer for a few hours, strain it, then pour into ice cube trays. When you need your next dose of flavor, crack out a cube and melt it into a dish.